



FEDERAL BENEFITS EXPERTS

LAS CRUCES
NEW MEXICO

CHAPTER 0182

*National Active & Retired
Federal Employees Association*

REPORTER

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Local Web Site: <http://www.narfe-nm.net>

National Web Site: www.narfe.org

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/NARFE.LasCrucesChapter.182>



**Chapter President
Judy Rosco**

**New Information
Regarding
Our Chapter
General Meetings**

We have been informed by Christine Wilkins, at the Independent Living of Las Cruces (formerly named Good Samaritan), that we will be charged \$25 an hour for room rent beginning at our December meeting. The cost for December will be \$75 for a three-hour meeting. The Board figured that we would need two hours for our Board meeting and three hours for the membership meeting each month, September – May, plus a Board meeting in August to the cost of \$1,175 per year. Also, our breakfast buffet cost is increasing (TBD). The facility is no longer a non-profit organization which means we could be charged taxes and gratuities. I have asked for a copy of the new usage agreement, but it is still being worked out. The Board members are looking at other venues, but no decision has been made at this time. Hopefully, we will know more at our December meeting.

We are looking forward to seeing our members at our Christmas breakfast meeting on December 14.

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**NARFE Chapter 182 General Meeting
Saturday, 14 December 2024, 8:30 a.m.
Independent Living for Las Cruces
(formerly known as Good Samaritan)
3011 Buena Vida
(Creative Arts Room)**



Come join us to hear the wonderful voices of the *Young at Heart* choral group at our December meeting. They will be performing a variety of Christmas songs for our entertainment. Get your voices ready and join in singing some of your favorite holiday carols.

There is a cost of \$17.00 for the breakfast buffet and reservations must be made not later than November 26th by calling Carol Main at 575-382-7686.



**Donna Harris
Programs**



Chapter 182 President's Message Continued

We had nine chapter members signed up for the *Walk to End Alzheimer's* on November 16th. The weather was perfect for the walk. This was the first time I had signed up for the walk and I thoroughly enjoyed it. There were 495 participants and 51 teams.



Judy Rosco, Marlene Mayfield,
Roy Willoughby, Della Apodaca,
Dave Fox, Cindy Cook, Marilyn
Koukol, & Donna Harris

Alzheimer's Cindy Cook

At the Nov 9th NARFE meeting we collected \$87 from the Alzheimer's raffle that will be sent to Alzheimer's National.

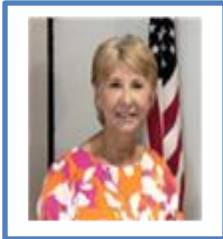
I would like to thank everyone in our chapter who donated money during our Alzheimer's raffles through the year and also donated separately to The Alzheimer's Walk. A few of us participated in the walk and had a very nice time. Our chapter donated \$925.18 to the event. We received an email from the Alzheimer's Association thanking us for helping the millions of people facing Alzheimer's today and those who will face it in the future. As a reminder the 24/7 Helpline is 800-272-3900.



Marilyn Koukol
Marlene Mayfield
Della Apodaca
Roy Willoughby
Judy Rosco



Thanks to Dave Fox for the great photos.



Legislation (Janice Bridges)

Great news! WEP/GPO finally passed the House of Representatives. The bill, S597, still needs to be brought to the floor of the Senate, and then passed with 60 votes. Please urge your Senators to bring it to the floor for a vote before the end of the year.

We also need to let our lawmakers know that we need their support to vote yes on HR 716 - The Fair COLA for Seniors and for HR866/S3194 - The Equal COLA.

Please read the NARFE bill tracker in the December *NARFE* magazine and read where each bill stands that impacts us. Let our lawmakers know that they need to support us and vote to protect us. Also read the article starting on page 10 about NARFE's grassroots advocacy progress - Quarter 3 report.

At the January meeting I will be showing our members how to use the NARFE.org website and where to go to find information and resources. I will also show you how easy it is to contact our lawmakers and ask them for support. I hope everyone had a safe and Happy Thanksgiving! Calories don't count on holidays. I am a mathematician -- I know these things.



Member Communications (Carol Main)

Welcome: Lawrence Horgan, Adam Judd, and Miriam Rodriguez



New Prospective Members

Alain Basurco
Leah Bradfute
Randy Castellano
Pablo C Delgado
Charlene Gamboa
Shad Harris

Sharon Kilian
Elizabeth Knoll
Haley Krump
Glynis Miranda
Aaron Nolan
Julia Olivarez

Leah Roberson
Teri Schneider
Jorden Scott
Kourtney Stailey
Jennifer Thomas
Samantha Wilson
Kirk Zivkovich

We would like to see you at the December 14 meeting.
Come meet your fellow chapter members.
Our chapter membership is 187 members strong!

Reminder: Have you changed your home address, telephone number, or email address? If you have dropped your landline and are using your cell phone only, let me know. Please notify me at csmain7@gmail.com or phone 575-382-7686. We don't want you to miss any copies of the *NARFE* magazine, our chapter newsletter, or any notices we send out.



Service Officer (Jim Kielty)

MEDICARE PART B MONTHLY PREMIUMS TO INCREASE IN 2025

The Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services recently announced that the standard monthly premium for those with Medicare Part B will increase from \$ 174.90 in 2024 to \$ 185.00 in 2025. In addition, the annual deductible for Medicare Part B beneficiaries will be \$257.00 in 2025, an increase of \$17.00 from the \$240.00 deductible amount in 2024.

The majority of Medicare recipients who are enrolled in Part B pay the standard monthly premium for this coverage. More affluent seniors pay higher Medicare Part B monthly premiums on a sliding scale based on their Modified Adjusted Gross Income for federal tax purposes.

OPM OPEN SEASON CONTINUES THROUGH DECEMBER 11

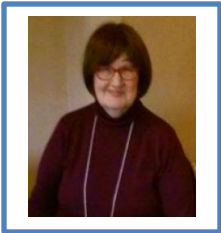
The Open Season for the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP) and the Federal Employees Dental and Vision Program (FEDVIP) for the 2025 benefits year will continue through December 11. All Open Season changes for federal retirees and survivor annuitants are effective January 1, 2025 and premium changes are reflected on February 1, 2025 annuity payments. Open Season changes for current federal employees are effective at the beginning of the first full pay period on or after January 1, 2025.

FEHBP changes may be made by going to Open Season Online at <https://retireefehb.opm.gov>. FEHBP changes may also be made by calling Open Season Express at 1-800-332-9798. During Open Season federal retirees and survivor annuitants may also request changes and information by regular mail by writing to the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) at FEHB Open Season Processing Center, P.O. Box 5000, Lawrence, KS 66046-0500. When using this option, clearly state in writing your Open Season request. If you are making an enrollment change state the type of coverage (Self Only, Self Plus One, or Self and Family) you desire and the enrollment code. Remember to include your annuity claim number (CSA or CSF number) and your Social Security Number on your request.

With regard to dental or vision insurance under FEDVIP, enrollments, cancellations, or changes may be accomplished by computer at the secure enrollment website www.benefeds.com or by calling 1-877-888-3337.

There are numerous sources available to assist you in determining if you should make any changes during the FEHBP/FEDVIP Open Season. These include the OPM website, the October, November, and December issues of the NARFE magazine, and the 2025 brochure of the plan in which you are currently enrolled, Section 2 of which reflects the plans changes for 2025. Remember, there is no one health, dental, or vision plan which is best for all. However, by doing your homework, you will find the plan which best meets your needs.





Marsha Smith is our Chapter's new Federal Employee Education and Assistance Fund (FEEA) Chair. FEEA is the only independent, nonprofit 501c3 organization devoted solely to providing emergency financial assistance and scholarships to our dedicated civilian federal and postal public servants and their families. Marsha previously served as our Chapter's Treasurer, Member at Large, and assisted in other chapter programs. We thank her for volunteering for this important position on our Executive Board.



This position was previously held by Roy Willoughby. Roy held the position of FEEA Chair for our chapter for several years and we thank him for all his time and effort dedicated to this important program.



Della Apodaca

We are ahead of schedule. Our Chapter has met its contribution goal of \$4,883 for this 2023 – 2024 cycle.

Through the third quarter 2024, 37 chapter members contributed \$5,650 to the PAC. The 37 contributors represent 20% of our 184-chapter membership (as of 10/28/2024). While our chapter has eight sustainers, we would like to see this number increase. The top three NM chapters, dollar-wise, are Las Cruces 51%, Albuquerque 30%, and Santa Fe 9%. Disbursements for NM political purposes totaling \$8,800, are as follows (at 9/30/2024):

(Martin Heinrich - \$3,500) -- (Gabe Vasquez - \$2,300)
 (Teresa Leger Fernandez - \$1,000) -- (Melanie Stansbury - \$2,000)

If you have not done so for this cycle, show your support by making a contribution to NARFE-PAC. You can make a voluntary contribution to the PAC either [online](#), through the mail via the form in the [NARFE magazine](#), or during a chapter meeting. You may also show your support by contributing to the PAC monthly with a credit card, or through your federal annuity by going to www.narfe.org/pac-sustainer. Thank you for your support of NARFE-PAC.*

**To comply with federal law, we must use our best efforts to obtain, maintain and submit the name, mailing address, occupation and name of employer of individuals whose contributions to NARFE-PAC exceed \$200 each calendar year. NARFE-PAC is for the benefit of political candidates and activities on a national level. NARFE members have the right to refuse to contribute without reprisal, and NARFE will neither favor nor disadvantage anyone based on the amount of a contribution or failure to make a voluntary contribution. The suggested amounts are only suggestions and not enforceable. Only members of NARFE may contribute to the PAC. Contributions from non-members will be returned. NARFE-PAC contributions are not deductible for federal income tax purposes.*



Sunshine Report (Marcele Skelton)

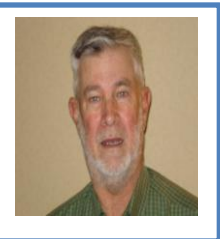
As December begins, we continue to lose a little sunshine each day. Not to worry! The Winter Solstice falls on December 21st. That means we will begin to gain more sunshine each day.



A sympathy card was sent to Marc Silva, son of Myrtle Silva. Myrtle passed away on November 4th. She was 99 years old and had been very active in Chapter 182.

Have some fun by trying to solve this Christmas riddle: WHY DID THE CHRISTMAS TREE GO TO THE BARBER? The answer to the Thanksgiving riddle: WHAT DO YOU CALL A TURKEY ON THE DAY AFTER THANKSGIVING? (Lucky)

Let me know if a member is ill, has passed away, or needs a little sunshine: 575-521-4954 or marcele@skelton.net.

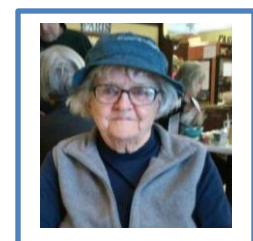


Membership Report

It's starting to get chilly and winter is almost here! We now have 187 members in our Chapter 182. Special shout out to new member *Larry Horgan* from Alamogordo, NM. We used to work together with Border Patrol a few years ago. Welcome!

Dan
Carroll
VP for
Membership
&
Historian

Holidays this month include Pearl Harbor Day on December 7th, Christmas on December 25th, and New Year's Eve on December 31st. Wow! Full moon (Mary Ellen) is December 15th. Quote of the month--"Just when I discovered the meaning of life, they changed it." -George Carlin. Have a great month! See you at the movies (Yvette)!



IN MEMORY OF MYRTLE SILVA

Myrtle Silva passed away in Nebraska on November 4th at the age of 99 years and 10 months. She moved to Nebraska a few years ago to be close to her son. Her 100th birthday was coming up on January 15th. She joined NARFE in 1985 and regularly attended our meetings and volunteered at our monthly meetings for years selling tickets for our Alzheimer's raffles. She was friendly and fun and had quite a hat collection. She never attended a meeting without wearing one of her hats!





Reminders!

--We do not publish a chapter newsletter in January.

--Upcoming meetings:

Jan 11 – Janice Bridges will show us how to use the NARFE website.

Feb 8 – Pam Rodgers will present You Matter Too – Self Care and Burnout

Mar 8 – Brandie White, Program Director, Mesilla Valley CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate



**National Active and Retired
Federal Employees Association
Chapter 182
PO Box 16424
Las Cruces, NM 88004-6424**

You Need NARFE and NARFE Needs You!

Chapter 182 Officers

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Service Officer:	Jim Kielty
jkielty70@yahoo.com	575-640-9585
Sunshine:	Marcele Skelton
marcele@skelton.net	575-521-4954

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Las Cruces, NM 88001
575-523-6561 - <http://www.heinrich.senate.gov>

U.S. Senator Ben Ray Lujan (D)
201 N Church St Suite 201B
Las Cruces, NM 88001
575-526-5475 - <http://www.lujan.senate.gov>

U.S. Representative Gabriel Vasquez (D) (District 2)
Las Cruces District Office, 115 W Griggs Ave, Las Cruces NM 88011 - <http://www.vasquez.house.gov>
DC Address and Phone: 202-225-2365
1517 Longworth House Office Bldg Wash DC 20515

The NARFE Las Cruces Chapter holds a breakfast meeting on the 2nd Saturday of each month except in June, July, and August. The meeting is held from 0830-1100 at **Independent Living for Las Cruces** (formerly called Good Samaritan) (Creative Arts Room/First Floor), Buena Vida Circle, Las Cruces. Reservations are required and breakfast cost is **\$17**. All members, those who might be interested in joining, and guests are most welcome. Membership is open to all federal civilian employees, retirees, their spouses, and surviving spouses. For reservations, contact **Carol Main (575-382-7686)** or email: lascrucschapter182@yahoo.com.

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